

Sea Turtle Volunteer Program

Share the Beach



Newsletter of the USFWS Daphne Field Office

<http://daphne.fws.gov>

August 15, 2002



Green Turtle, Turtle Trax website

Just a Reminder

Our next meeting will be
Thursday Sept. 12, 6:30 PM at
Gulf State Park Resort Hotel

Inside this Issue

- Review of August 8th meeting
- Nest Hatching Update
- NY Times Article about Poaching

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Share the Beach Newsletter

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Share the Beach Update

Thanks to everyone who attended the meeting last week. Here are a few of the key points from that meeting. Please keep the use of the red flashlights to an absolute minimum because it will still disorient the turtles. Also avoid wiping sand off of the nest or adding more on while the hatchlings are emerging. The hatchlings need that soft sand to fall into the depression in order for them to escape. We are requesting that everyone continue patrolling the beaches in the mornings through August 23. You are still welcome to continue your morning patrols on a voluntary basis for the month of September.

Everyone needs to remember to stay in contact with your team leaders and the SCA interns. If you have signed up to nest sit and are not able to make it, please contact your team leaders or the interns to let us know.

This past Saturday we had multiple nests hatch before 8 PM. There were rainstorms earlier that day and those cool conditions probably confused the turtles causing them to emerge earlier than normal. Therefore after a rainstorm it is a good idea to check any nests that you feel may be close to hatching before the scheduled 8 PM check.

There was an article printed in the August 2nd edition of the *NY Times* that discussed the problem of sea turtle egg poaching in parts of Florida. The article, entitled “Eggs of Endangered Turtles Fall Prey to FL Dealers,” explains how black market dealers in Florida sell turtle eggs in ethnic communities where the eggs are considered a delicacy and aphrodisiac. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission estimates that tens of thousands of eggs are being poached from nests along 100 miles of Florida beaches. Here in Alabama we are looking into coding the nest sites as opposed to putting the nest dates in order to alleviate this potential problem.

Check out our new logo:



Visit our new web site for the latest information:

<http://daphne.fws.gov>



Nest Update

We are having an outstanding hatching season so far! As of Thursday August 15th, we have had 18 nests hatch. These nests are: A-1 through A-11; B-1 and B-2; C-1; G-2; H-1 and H-2; I-1 and I-4. The average emergence success rate for these nests is 83%. Last season the average was 34%. The total number of hatchlings that have emerged from the nest is a whopping 1,902! The average incubation time for the nests is running at 66 days although we have had nests hatch as early as 56 days and as late as 75 days.

The following nests are at Day 55 or over and should be hatching soon: A-13 and A-14; B-3; D-1; G-3; H-4; and I-5. Since our last newsletter, three new nests have been found. I-11 was found on August 1st, D-3 on August 9th and H-7 on August 11th. We are obviously seeing a large decline in the number of new nests but keep looking because we don't want to miss any. Have a great week and call us if you need anything!